



Include pharma workforce in priority list for COVID-19 vaccination: Pharma associations

The proposed move will benefit over two million workforce and ensure uninterrupted supply of medicines in the country, say associations



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Pharma industry associations, Indian Drug Manufacturers Association (IDMA) and the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), have written individual letters to Dr Vinod Paul, Member of Niti Aayog have requested the Government of India to include pharma workforce in the priority list of COVID-19 vaccinations.

The letters highlight that COVID-19 vaccination will protect around two million workforce against the disease and will not only be a recognition for them but also ensure uninterrupted manufacture and supply of medicines in the country.

“The industry will be ready to support the government for distributing and dispensing of the vaccines. We once again assure you of the commitment of the pharma industry to support the government in this critical juncture,” stated one of the letter.

Sudarshan Jain, Secretary-General, IPA, said, “The request to include the pharma workforce in the priority list of COVID 19 vaccination is to ensure that all our workforce from each segment of the industry continues their services in ensuring uninterrupted supply of medicines in the country. The industry is already classified as an essential goods and services industry wherein the employees and all stakeholders have been committed to ensuring the consistent availability of medicines during the COVID -19 pandemic, therefore, we have requested the government to consider our workforce also in the priority list of COVID 19 vaccination.”

Addressing a query on isn't it too late to make such a request, Daara Patel, Secretary, IDMA said, “The government has announced that initially the COVID-19 vaccine will be given to frontline healthcare workers, which will take minimum 20- 30 days for a nationwide vaccination on them.

Then, people who are above the age group of 50 with comorbidities have been added in the priority list, our people can also be considered at the same time. It will have dual benefits, as it will be a recognition to our people who continued working in difficult times of COVID pandemic and ensure uninterrupted supply of medicines across the country. And their protection from the disease will further ensure that the supply of medicines remains uninterrupted.”

Commenting on the probability of the government not including the pharma workforce in the priority list, Jain responded, “In such a situation, the industry will wait for the vaccines' availability in the open market and then, individually pharma companies will strategise their course of action for COVID vaccination of their employees.”

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COVID-19 vaccination

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pharma workforce

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vaccine priority list